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Dear Maine Immunization Program Provider,

Health care providers, local public health units, tribal health and many other health partners are working diligently in response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. **During this time, the Maine Immunization Program (MIP) recommends that routine vaccination, especially of infants, should continue.** This ensures that our communities remain free of vaccine preventable diseases and that individuals are as healthy as possible. If routine vaccination is postponed, we could be faced not only with a COVID-19 pandemic but an outbreak of vaccine preventable diseases, like measles. The [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#) has provided additional guidance on immunizations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Health care providers may need to be innovative about ensuring continuity of immunizations, including:

- screening for symptoms/travel prior to appointments,
- staggering appointments to reduce congestion in waiting rooms,
- cohorting ill patients at certain locations and continuing immunizations at other sites,
- working with local public health units,
- using drive thru vaccination clinics, and/or
- utilizing drive thru COVID-19 testing sites, so immunizations may be administered at usual locations.

If necessary, health care providers can delay immunizations for children older than 24 months and adults.

Additionally, MIP health care providers are encouraged to revisit their private influenza vaccine pre-booking orders for next fall and order additional doses of influenza vaccine, if possible. This fall, it will be more important than ever to vaccinate as many people as possible against influenza. Influenza vaccination will be critical to reducing illness and burden on our health care infrastructure.

If healthcare facilities do close or decide to discontinue vaccination, all storage units that contain state-supplied vaccines must still have adequate storage and handling to ensure vaccine viability. **Data loggers must still be in place and min/max temperatures be checked and recorded each morning.** Temperatures must also be submitted within ImmPact at a minimum of once every 30 days. All temperature excursions must be reported and followed up on accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact the Maine Immunization Program at 207-287-3746.

Thank you for all that you do for the Maine Immunization Program and the children of Maine.